

Message Text

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TAGS: MARR, MASS, NATO, NL

SUBJECT: SEMINAR ON NATO DEFENSE STRATEGY

1. PRACTICALLY ALL OF NETHERLANDS' DEFENSE ESTABLISHMENT TURNED OUT FOR FOUR-HOUR PROGRAM JUNE 2 IN THE HAGUE TO HEAR AMERICANS, STEVEN CANBY AND LEON SLOSS, DISCUSS QUESTION OF NATO'S CONVENTIONAL DEFENSE. ORGANIZED AT SUGGESTION OF DEFMIN VREDELING AS AN OUTGROWTH OF SECOND CHAMBER DISCUSSION OF DUTCH DEFENSE WHITE PAPER LAST FALL, SESSION ATTENDED BY VREDELING, HIS TWO STATE SECRETARYS, MFA STATE SECRETARY KOOIJMANS, DEPUTY NATO PERM REP BUWALDA, DUTCH MILITARY COMMANDERS, AND HEADS OF VARIOUS PEACE INSTITUTES.

2. CANBY ADDRESS FOCUSSED ON NEED FOR RESTRUCTURING NATO'S CONVENTIONAL ARMY DEFENSE WITH HEAVY EMPHASIS ON LARGER NUMBER OF RESERVE FORMATIONS, USE OF NEW TECHNOLOGY AND CREATION OF SMALLER (BUT MORE NUMEROUS) INDIVIDUAL UNITS. SLOSS IN GENERAL AGREEMENT WITH MANY OF CANBY'S PROPOSALS, BUT SAW GENERAL RESTRUCTURING AS BEING RATHER FAR DOWN THE PIKE. MORE IMMEDIATE BENEFIT TO NATO WOULD BE ADOPTION OF PROPOSALS IN CALLAGHAN STUDY ON UNCLASSIFIED

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STANDARDIZATION.

3. AS PROGRAM ARRANGED BY VREDELING PRIMARILY FOR PARLIAMENTARIANS, QUESTION PERIOD RESERVED FOR THEM. DEFENSE SPECIALISTS FROM SECOND CHAMBER, WHILE NOT IGNORING CANBY PRESENTATION, USED OCCASION TO VOICE MORE GENERAL CONCERNS: CREDIBILITY OF U.S. NUCLEAR GUARANTEE, FRENCH ROLE IN EUROPEAN ARMED CONFLICT, EFFECT ON RESERVE LEVELS OF SMALL COUNTRIES WHICH GO TO ALL VOLUNTEER ARMIES, AND SOUNDNESS (MORALLY AS WELL AS MILITARILY) OF WESTERN NEGOTIATING POSITION AT MBFR TALKS.

4. NETHERLANDS' MOST TOPICAL DEFENSE QUESTION, REPLACEMENT OF F104'S BY F16'S NOT DIRECTLY RAISED BY SPEAKERS OR PARLIAMENTARIANS. BUT IN RESPONSE TO TWO QUESTIONS (ONE BY LABOR PARTY MEMBER DANKERT AND ONE BY DEFENSE COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN VAN ELSSEN) CANBY DID GET INTO AREA OF PROPER AIRCRAFT FOR CENTRAL SECTOR. HIS RESPONSES PROVIDED A BIT OF AMMUNITION FOR BOTH SIDES WHEN HE SAID AT ONE POINT THAT F16 WAS SUPERB AIRCRAFT FOR OPERATING IN CENTRAL SECTOR, BUT LATER GOT BIG SMILES AND HEAD NODDING FROM LABOR PARLIAMENTARIANS WHEN HE SAID THAT CENTRAL SECTOR NEEDED MIX OF HIGH FLYING AIR COMBAT FIGHTERS PLUS SEPARATE AIRCRAFT FOR GROUND SUPPORT TOL. BOTH CANBY STATEMENTS LIKELY BE QUOTED DURING SECOND CHAMBER DEBATE ON F16 JUNE 5.
TANGUY

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